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| 09/877,181 | 06/11/2001 | Carie J. Wimberly | BS00-049 | 1233 |

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EXAMINER

THAI, CANG G

| ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
|----------|--------------|
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3629

DATE MAILED: 12/19/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/877,181

Applicant(s)

WIMBERLY ET AL.

Examiner

Cang G. Thai

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 June 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 2-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,058,380 (ANDERSON ET AL).

As for claim 2, ANDERSON discloses a method for automating error processing and correction in usage and billing systems comprising:

receiving at least one set of error processing rules in at least one master database to be executed by at least one processor and applied to a plurality of defective billing records {Column 16, Lines 65-67, wherein this reads over “an AP format rule table 138 contains an entry for each format rule that has been specified for the generation of customer-specific AP feeds”};

receiving the plurality of defective billing records from one or more billing systems to the at least one master database {Column 6, Lines 2-4, wherein this reads over “an invoice analyzer 32 retrieves each invoice that has yet to be analyze from intermediary database 66 via a communication path 50, e.g., the internal bus of a mainframe”};

categorizing the plurality of defective billing records by at least a defined error code {Column 6, Lines 5-10, wherein this reads over “invoice analyzer 32 evaluates each invoice, e.g., by performing a reasonability check, and assigns a green, yellow or red status to the invoice as to payment along with explanatory information, based upon analysis criteria that the customer has established for the account corresponding to the invoice”};

presenting the categorized received billing records for an administrative review {Column 6, Lines 48-53, wherein this reads over “upon receipt of the file, EDI translator 26 performs a syntax check on the invoices contained therein and sends an acknowledgement, to the vendor 10 via communication path 16”};

accepting ad hoc sets of processing rules and administrative overrides {Column 14, Lines 33-35, wherein this reads over “intermediary report generator 64 can generate on an ad hoc basis reports containing information of vendor interest”};

applying the one or more sets of defined and ad hoc error processing rules to the plurality of defective billing records to correct the billing records {Column 14, Lines 35-37, wherein this reads over “intermediary report generator 64 can retrieve any information contained in intermediary database 66, as needed”};

sending a warning when a defective billing record is encountered by the one of more error processing rules that has an undefined error code {Column 4, Lines 39-41, wherein this reads over “if an exception is detected, action is taken in accordance with Table 1”}; and

sending corrected billing records to their corresponding billing systems for further processing {Column 4, Line 39-41, wherein this reads over “if an exception is detected, action is taken in accordance with Table 1 and an exception report is generated in accordance with Table 2”}.

As for claim 3, ANDERSON discloses the method of claim 2 wherein a processing rule includes a description of the rule, a rule start date, a rule end date and a rule maximum duration {Column 16, Lines 51-53, wherein this reads over “a payment rule table 145 contains an entry for each payment criterion, including reasonability criteria, that has been specified by any customer”}.

As for claim 4, ANDERSON discloses the method of claim 3 wherein a processing rule is manually extended, modified, deleted and copied into a new rule {Column 9, Lines 7-11, wherein this reads over “a customer can execute invoice reviewer 98 to take action on an Invoice or modify previous action taken on an invoice, e.g., rejection of a formerly approved invoice, during the period up to and including the date of payment”}.

As for claim 5, ANDERSON discloses the method of claim 2 wherein a warning is sent when a predetermined threshold is met limiting the total number of records received from the one or more billing systems {Column 12, Lines 20-23, wherein this reads over “the records for each invoice is maintained in intermediary database 66 for a set of period, e.g., two years, from the time when the invoice is received by the intermediary”}.

As for claim 6, ANDERSON discloses the method of claim 2 wherein processing rules are applied to individual errors and to classes of errors in a batch process {Column 14, Lines 52-58, wherein this reads over “error reports - e.g: companies not processed monitor reports files that have been picked up or are pending”}.

As for claim 7, ANDERSON discloses the method of claim 2, further comprising balancing volume flows of defective billing records and sending a warning when an out of balance condition exists {Column 14, Lines 58-66, wherein this reads over “early warning account number changes audit of all updates and actions status on pending actions (approval/disapproval), etc. reconciliation end-of-day”}.

As for claim 8, ANDERSON discloses a computer-readable medium storing a plurality of instructions to be executed by a processor for automating error processing and correction in usage and billing systems, the plurality of instructions comprising:

receive at least one set of error processing rules in one or more master databases to be executed by at least one processor and applied to a plurality of defective billing records {Column 16, Lines 65-67, wherein this reads over “an AP format rule table 138 contains an entry for each format rule that has been specified for the generation of customer-specific AP feeds”};

receive a plurality of defective billing records from one or more billing systems to the one or more master databases {Column 6, Lines 2-4, wherein this reads over “an invoice analyzer 32 retrieves each invoice that has yet to be analyze from intermediary database 66 via a communication path 50, e.g., the internal bus of a mainframe”};

group the plurality of defective billing records by a defined error type {Column 6, Lines 5-10, wherein this reads over "invoice analyzer 32 evaluates each invoice, e.g., by performing a reasonability check, and assigns a green, yellow or red status to the invoice as to payment along with explanatory information, based upon analysis criteria that the customer has established for the account corresponding to the invoice"};

present the grouped billing records for an administrative review {Column 6, Lines 48-53, wherein this reads over "upon receipt of the file, EDI translator 26 performs a syntax check on the invoices contained therein and sends an acknowledgement, to the vendor 10 via communication path 16"};

send a warning when a defective billing record is encountered that was not anticipated by the one of more sets of error processing rules {Column 4, Lines 39-41, wherein this reads over "if an exception is detected, action is taken in accordance with Table 1"};

accept ad hoc sets of processing rules and administrative overrides {Column 14, Lines 33-35, wherein this reads over "intermediary report generator 64 can generate on an ad hoc basis reports containing information of vendor interest"};

apply the one or more sets of error processing rules to the plurality of defective billing records to correct the billing records {Column 14, Lines 35-37, wherein this reads over "intermediary report generator 64 can retrieve any information contained in intermediary database 66, as needed"}; and

send the corrected billing records to their corresponding billing systems for further processing {Column 4, Line 39-41, wherein this reads over "if an exception is

detected, action is taken in accordance with Table 1 and an exception report is generated in accordance with Table 2"}.

As for claim 9, ANDERSON discloses the computer-readable medium of claim 8 wherein a processing rule includes a description of the rule, a rule start date, a rule end date and a rule maximum duration {Column 16, Lines 51-53, wherein this reads over "a payment rule table 145 contains an entry for each payment criterion, including reasonability criteria, that has been specified by any customer"}.

As for claim 10, ANDERSON discloses the computer-readable medium of claim 9 wherein a processing rule is manually extended, modified, deleted and copied into a new rule {Column 9, Lines 7-11, wherein this reads over "a customer can execute invoice reviewer 98 to take action on an Invoice or modify previous action taken on an invoice, e.g., rejection of a formerly approved invoice, during the period up to and including the date of payment"}.

As for claim 11, ANDERSON discloses the computer-readable medium of claim 8 wherein a warning is sent when a predetermined threshold is met limiting the total number of records received from the one or more billing systems {Column 12, Lines 20-23, wherein this reads over "the records for each invoice is maintained in intermediary database 66 for a set of period, e.g., two years, from the time when the invoice is received by the intermediary"}.

As for claim 12, ANDERSON discloses the computer-readable medium of claim 8 wherein processing rules are applied to individual errors and to classes of errors in a batch process {Column 14, Lines 52-58, wherein this reads over "error reports - e.g:

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companies not processed monitor reports files that have been picked up or are pending"}.

As for claim 13, ANDERSON discloses the computer-readable medium of claim 8, the plurality of instructions further comprising balancing volume flows of defective billing records and sending a warning when an out of balance conditions exists {Column 14, Lines 58-66, wherein this reads over "early warning account number changes audit of all updates and actions status on pending actions (approval/disapproval), etc. reconciliation end-of-day"}.

As for claim 14, ANDERSON discloses a device for automating error processing and correction in usage and billing systems comprising:

a master database including at least one set of error processing rules and a plurality of defective billing records received from one or more billing systems {Fig. 1, Element 104}; and

a processor in communication with the master database and the usage and billing systems, the at least one processor categorizing the plurality of defective billing records of the master database by at least a defined error code, presenting the categorized billing records for an administrative review, accepting ad hoc sets of processing rules and administrative overrides, applying the one or more sets of defined and ad hoc error processing rules to the plurality of defective billing records to correct the billing records, and sending corrected billing records to their corresponding billing systems for further processing {Column 8, Lines 44-47, wherein this reads over "the

customer controls the synchronization of databases 66 and 86, with respect to invoice review and approval, through the execution of customer communication interface 84”}.

As for claim 15, ANDERSON discloses the device of claim 14, wherein the processor provides a graphical user interface and wherein the processor presents the categorized billing records for an administrative review via the graphical user interface {Column 7, Lines 65-67, wherein this reads over “intermediary communications interface 80 uploads the data to communication path 82, e.g., a public data communications network”}.

As for claim 16, ANDERSON discloses the device of claim 14, wherein the processor sends a warning when a defective billing record is encountered by the one of more error processing rules that has an undefined error code {Column 4, Lines 39-41, wherein this reads over “if an exception is detected, action is taken in accordance with Table 1”}.

As for claim 17, ANDERSON discloses the device of claim 14, wherein the processor sends a warning when a predetermined threshold is met limiting the toll number of records received into the master database from the one or more billing systems {Column 12, Lines 20-23, wherein this reads over “the records for each invoice is maintained in intermediary database 66 for a set of period, e.g., two years, from the time when the invoice is received by the intermediary”}.

As for claim 18, ANDERSON discloses the device of claim 14, wherein the processor applies the error processing rules to individual errors and to classes of errors in a batch process {Column 14, Lines 52-58, wherein this reads over “error reports - e.g:

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companies not processed monitor reports files that have been picked up or are pending"}.

As for claim 19, ANDERSON discloses the device of claim 14, wherein the processor balances volume flows of defective billing records and sends a warning when an out of balance condition exists {Column 14, Lines 58-66, wherein this reads over "early warning account number changes audit of all updates and actions status on pending actions (approval/disapproval), etc. reconciliation end-of-day"}.

As for claim 20, ANDERSON discloses the device of claim 14, wherein an error-processing rule includes a description of the rule, a rule start date, a rule end date, and a rule maximum duration {Column 16, Lines 51-53, wherein this reads over "a payment rule table 145 contains an entry for each payment criterion, including reasonability criteria, that has been specified by any customer"}.

Conclusion

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

I. U.S. Patent:

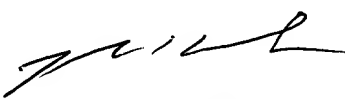
- 1) U.S. Patent No. 6,714,979 (BRANDT ET AL) is cited to teach data warehousing infrastructure for web based reporting tool,
- 2) U.S. Patent No. 6,360,211 (ANDERSON ET AL) is cited to teach system and method for electronically processing invoice information, and
- 3) U.S. Patent No. 6,615,258 (BARRY ET AL) is cited to teach integrated customer interface for web based data management.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cang (James) G. Thai whose telephone number is (571) 272-6499. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:30 AM - 3:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on (571) 272-6812. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

CGT
11/18/2005



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ELECTRONIC PATENT EXAMINER
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